**Target Price Change** 

11 March 2025

### BUY

56% **★** side

Target price: US\$25.00 Prior TP: US\$23.00

HSAI US Price: US\$16.01

TP basis: P/E

Sector rating: NEUTRAL

#### Forecast Revisions (%)

Year ended 31 Dec	25E	26E	27E
Revenue	(8.0)	8.5	0
Core EPS	108.4	51.5	0

Source: BOCI Research estimates

#### Trading Summary



(%)	YTD	1M	3M	12M
Absolute	15.8	(6.3)	40.4	198.1
Relative to SP500	21.4	1.3	52.2	171.8
Shares outstanding (m)				127
Free float (%)		43		
Market cap. (US\$ m)		2,041		
3M avg. daily turnover (U		19		
Net debt/equity (%) (2025		NM		
Major shareholder (%)				
Mr. LI Yifan				8
Mr. SUN Kai				8
Mr. XIANG Shaoqing				8

Source: Company data, FactSet, BOCI Research

Prices as of 11 March 2025

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# Hesai Group

In-line 4Q24 results; Upbeat 2025 guidance for shipment and profitability

Driven by another quarterly high LiDAR shipments of 222k units, Hesai's total revenue rose by 33.4% QoQ to RMB702m in 4Q24, and registered its first quarterly GAAP net profit of RMB147m, both in line with prior guidance. For 2025, the company provided an upbeat LiDAR shipment guidance of 1.2m-1.5m units, driven by promising ADAS LiDAR orders from two existing largest clients (Li Auto/Xiaomi) and mass-market customers (BYD/Leapmotor), as well as order upsurge for high-margin robotics market with new JT series. Although the full-year revenue guidance implies a drastic ASP decline caused by product mix change in both ADAS and robotics offerings, the mgmt. conveyed confidence in maintaining above-peers gross margin at around 40%, and aiming for non-GAAP net profit of RMB350m-500m in 2025, a strong beat versus consensus. Hence, we raise our earnings forecasts for 2025-26E and switch our valuation methodology from P/S to P/E multiples. By adopting 25x 2026E P/E, we lift our TP to US\$25.00. Reiterate BUY.

#### **Key Factors for Rating**

- In-line 4Q24 results with bottom line turning to profit. Hesai delivered 222,054 LiDAR units in 4Q24, up 153.1% YoY/65.5% QoQ and breaking a new record high, mostly thanks to robust ADAS LiDAR demand from major large customers and volume contribution from robotics LiDAR new launches JT series. Despite the product revenue per unit declining sequentially to RMB3,160 amid the product mix changeover within robotics lidar lineups, total revenue rose by 28.3% YoY/33.4% QoQ to RMB702m in 4Q24, in line with prior guidance. The blended gross margin fell 8.7ppts QoQ to 39% in 4Q24, mainly due to the lower high-margin NRE revenue and mix changes (higher contribution from ADAS business whose gross margin lower than high-margin robotics business). In addition, thanks to the prepayment of c.RMB200m from a major robotaxi client that booked in other operating income, Hesai recognised GAAP net profit of RMB147m in 4Q24, and also became the first LiDAR supplier to realise full-year non-GAAP profit of RMB13.7m in 2024.
- **Upbeat guidance for LiDAR shipment in 2025.** For the full-year of 2025, the company gives the upbeat LiDAR shipment guidance of 1.2m-1.5m units (versus 1m units in prior guidance in 3Q24 results), among which 1.0m-1.3m units from ADAS LiDAR and around 200k units from robotics LiDAR with newly-released products ATX and JX series as the major contributors. For ADAS LiDARs, besides the solid demand from its two largest exclusive clients **Li Auto** (LI US/TP: US\$36.00; 2015 HK/TP: HK\$140.00, BUY) and **Xiaomi** (1810 HK/TP: HK\$70.00, BUY), we see new partnership with **BYD** (1211 HK/TP: HK\$325.00, BUY)(over 10 smart-driving models) and expanding collaboration with **Leapmotor** (9863 HK/NR)'s B-platform models set to give a strong lift for ATX's demand upside. For robotics LiDAR, we expect JT series (launched last December) will lead the growth, while non-JT series robotics LiDAR (i.e. Pandar/XT/QT) may ship 25-30k units in 2025.

#### **Investment Summary**

Year ended 31 Dec	2023	2024	2025E	2026E	2027E
Revenue (RMB m)	1,877	2,077	3,440	5,881	8,833
Reported net profit (RMB m)	(476)	(102)	265	744	1,434
Core EPS (RMB)	(1.893)	0.107	3.258	7.246	12.815
Fully diluted EPS (RMB)	(3.734)	(0.803)	2.081	5.834	11.246
Core P/E (x)	NM	1,083.1	35.7	16.1	9.1
Fully diluted P/E (x)	NM	NM	55.9	19.9	10.3
EV/EBITDA (x)	NM	NM	39.0	14.6	7.3
P/B (x)	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.1	2.4
DPS (RMB)	0	0	0	0	0
Yield (%)	0	0	0	0	0
ROE (%)	NM	0.4	10.7	21.0	29.8

Source: Company data, BOCI Research estimates

Full-year guidance on net profit/margin significantly beat consensus. For 2025, management guided in-line revenue of RMB3.0-3.5bn, which suggests a drastic ASP (revenue per unit) pullback to RMB2.3-2.5k versus over RMB4k in 2024, primarily caused by product mix shift in both ADAS and robotics LiDARs to reach a wider addressable market with cheaper newly-launched products (ATX and JT series). Despite the lower-than-estimated ASP, management conveyed confidence that the full-year gross margin to stay healthy at around 40%, especially for JT series. Despite its ASP dipping to several thousand RMB, management indicated its gross margin could maintain at similar-level with other robotics LiDAR products. Combined with enhanced cost disciplines and operational efficiency, the company aims to reach RMB200m-350m GAAP net profit and RMB350m-500m non-GAAP net profit for 2025, a strong beat versus consensus.

#### **Valuation**

- To reflect the upbeat guidance for full-year LiDAR shipments, we lift our sales volume forecasts for 2025-2026E to 1.4m/2.5m units, from 1.06m/2.08m units. By breakdown, we expect the company to ship 1.2m/200k ADAS LiDAR/robotics LiDAR respectively in 2025. Specifically for the ADAS LiDARs, we project ATX/AT128/AT512 to account for 75%/25%/5% in overall ADAS LiDAR shipments this year. Given on-going product mix changeover and the escalated sales proportion of newly-launched ATX/JT series with substantial price discounts vs. existing LiDAR products, we nudge down our ASP assumptions for ADAS/Robotics LiDAR to RMB1,725/6,300, respectively in 2025.
- Over past five years, due to the product portfolio switchover towards ADAS LiDAR products and continuous price drop for ADAS LiDAR during the early penetration stage for LiDAR adoption, the company witnessed a continuous sharp decline in product revenue per unit from RMB 99k in 2020 to RMB 2.4k expected in 2025E. Yet, we render the downtrend of the product revenue per unit may see a potential turnaround around 2026-27E, essentially driven by i) strengthened ADAS LiDAR product structure with high-performance AT512 mass deliveries from 3Q24; and ii) increasing overseas higher-priced ADAS LiDAR contribution. In addition, along with the migration of L3 and above automation, we expect the number of LiDAR per vehicle may see increase, which will give a potential lift to value content per vehicle beyond 2026.
- Given the mixed adjustments in volume and ASP assumption, we largely leave our 2025E revenue forecasts intact at RMB3.4bn, while raising our 2026E revenue forecasts by 8.5% to RMB5.9bn. Coupled with stringent OPEX control, we raise our non-GAAP net profit forecasts for 2025-2026E to RMB415m/924m, from RMB199m/610m, respectively.
- In regard to the Hesai's maiden quarterly breakeven/full-year non-GAAP net profit last year and faster profit release outlook ahead, we expect the company to usher into a sustainable profitable growth stage from 2025. Hence, we switch our valuation methodology from P/S to P/E relative valuation to appropriately reflect its operational quality and profitable growth potential. By adopting 25x 2026E P/E, we raise our TP to US\$25.00 from prior TP of US\$23.00 (based on 6x 2025E P/S). If adopting same valuation metrics with direct counterparts, Hesai's current multiples of 4.2x 2025E P/S and 2.5x 2026E P/S are apparently lower than **RoboSense** (2498 HK/NR)'s (7.3x 2025E P/S and 5.2x 2026E P/S), which we deem is unreasonable after taking into account the market presence, revenue scale and profitability of Hesai against Robosense. Reiterate **BUY** on the stock.

Figure	1	Hosai's	Resulte	Summary
ricine		nesai s	Results	Summary

(RMB m)	1Q24	2Q24	3Q24	4Q24	YoY (%)	QoQ (%)	2023	2024	YoY (%)
Revenue	359	459	539	720	28.3	33.4	1,877	2,077	10.7
Cost of sales (-)	220	252	282	439	33.1	55.6	1,216	1,193	(1.9)
Gross profit / (loss)	139	207	258	281	21.4	9.1	661	885	33.7
R&D expenses(-)	194	199	220	242	6.1	10.0	791	856	8.2
Sales and marketing expenses (-)	42	56	46	49	(1.1)	6.2	149	193	29.7
General and administrative expenses (-)	69	66	77	105	(20.9)	37.8	320	317	(1.0)
Other operating income, net	27	18	8	222	1,190.1	2,593.8	27	276	941.1
Loss from operations	(138)	(96)	(77)	107	NA	NA	(572)	(205)	NA
Interest income	33	24	26	22	(26.9)	(11.8)	100	104	4.6
Interest expense	2	3	4	4	338.2	2.6	(3)	(13)	NA
Foreign exchange (losses)/gains, net	1	4	(14)	23	(418.8)	NA	(0)	15	NA
Share of loss in equity method investment	(0)	(0)	0	(0)	NA	(166.7)	(0)	(0)	NA
Others, net	(0)	0	(1)	(1)	NA	NA	0	(2)	(7,382.4)
Other income/(expenses)	32	24	7	41	81.0	502.6	96	104	7.7
Loss before income tax expense	(107)	(72)	(70)	148	NA	NA	(475)	(101)	NA
Income tax expense (-)	0	0	(0)	1	(20.5)	NA	1	1	71.7
Net loss	(107)	(72)	(70)	147	NA	NA	(476)	(102)	NA
Net Income/(loss) attributable to ordinary shareholders of the Company	(107)	(72)	(70)	147	NA	NA	(476)	(102)	NA
Key ratio (%)				,	YoY (ppts)	QoQ (ppts)		,	YoY (ppts)
Gross margin	38.8	45.1	47.7	39.0	(2.2)	(8.7)	35.2	42.6	7.4
R&D ratio	54.1	43.3	40.8	33.7	(7.0)	(7.2)	42.1	41.2	(0.9)
Sell exp ratio	11.7	12.1	8.6	6.8	(2.0)	(1.7)	12.2	16.2	3.9

14.2

(14.3)

(13.0)

14.7

14.8

20.4

Source: Company data, BOCI Research

G&A ratio

Operating margin

Net margin (GAAP)

Figure 2. Quarterly Revenue and Product Revenue per Unit

19.1

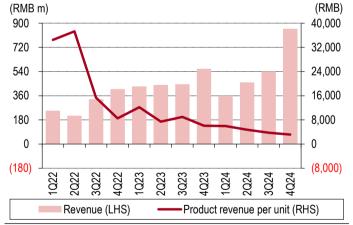
(38.6)

(29.8)

14.4

(20.9)

(15.7)



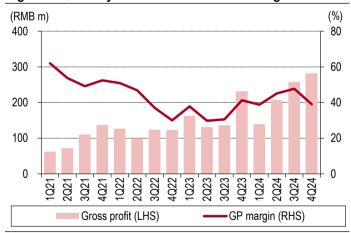
Source: Company data, BOCI Research

Figure 3. Quarterly Gross Profit and Gross Margin

(9.1)

43.8

45.5



0.5

29.1

33.5

17.1

(30.5)

(25.4)

15.3

(9.9)

(4.9)

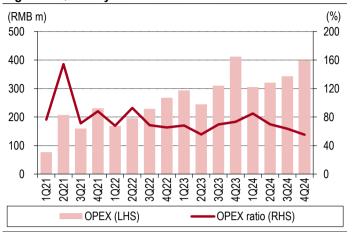
(1.8)

20.6

20.4

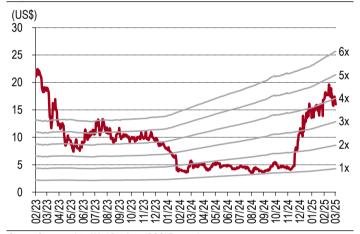
Source: Company data, BOCI Research

Figure 4. Quarterly OPEX and OPEX Ratio



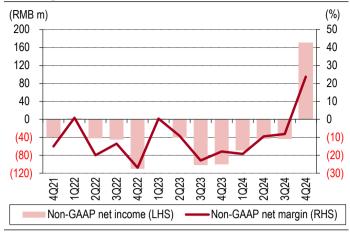
Source: Company data, BOCI Research

Figure 6. Hesai's P/S Band



Source: Company data, Wind Database, BOCI Research

Figure 5. Quarterly Non-GAAP Net Income and Non-GAAP Net Margin



Source: Company data, BOCI Research

Figure 7. Hesai's P/S Range



Source: Company data, Wind Database, BOCI Research



2027E

19.3 17.2

19.1

16.2

2.3

NM

NM

1.9

10.3

9.1 14.2

2.4

15.6

7.3

74.6

60.8

91.9

0

29.8 17.4

28.5

5

Income Statement (RMB m)						Cash-flow Stateme	ent (RMB	m)								
Year ended 31 Dec	2023	2024	2025E	2026E	2027E	Year ended 31 Dec	2023	2024	2025E	2026E	2027E					
Revenue	1,877	2,077	3,440	5,881	8,833	Pre-tax profit	(475)	(101)	312	875	1,687					
Cost of sales	(1,216)	(1,193)	(2,031)	(3,723)	(5,695)	Depr. & amortisation	86	104	131	164	189					
Operating exp.	(1,233)	(1,089)	(1,180)	(1,390)	(1,620)	Net interest expenses	(97)	(92)	(84)	(106)	(168)					
EBITDA	(485)	(101)	360	933	1,708	Chg. in working capital	147	217	87	(65)	(65)					
Depr & amortisation	86	104	131	164	189	Tax paid	0	0	0	0	0					
Operating profit (EBIT)	(572)	(205)	229	769	1,519	Other operating activ's	396	(17)	(47)	(131)	(253)					
Net interest inc./(exp.)	97	92	84	106	168	CF from operations	57	111	400	736	1,390					
Other gains/(losses)	(0)	12	0	0	0	CAPEX	(415)	(430)	(436)	(438)	(440)					
Pre-tax profit	(475)	(101)	312	875	1,687	Decr./(incr.) in invest.	0	0	0	0	0					
Tax on profit	(1)	(1)	(47)	(131)	(253)	Other investing activ's	(646)	9	0	0	0					
Min. int./others	0	0	0	0	0	CF from investing	(1,060)	(421)	(436)	(438)	(440)					
Net profit	(476)	(102)	265	744	1,434	Net incr. in equity	1,243	-	-	-	-					
Core net profit	(241)	14	415	924	1,634	Net incr. in debt	377	(12)	(100)	258	(232)					
EPS (RMB)	(3.734)	(0.803)	2.081	5.834	11.246	Dividends paid	(40)	92	84	106	168					
Core EPS (RMB)	(1.893)	0.107	3.258	7.246	12.815	Other financing activ's	11	(169)	0	0	0					
DPS (RMB)	0	0	0	0	0	CF from financing	1,590	(89)	(16)	364	(64)					
Revenue YoY %	56.1	10.7	65.6	71.0	50.2	Change in cash	587	(400)	(53)	662	886					
EBIT YoY %	NM	NM	NM	236.3	97.6	Cash at start of year	913	1,555	1,155	1,102	1,764					
EBITDA YoY %	NM	NM	NM	159.4	83.1	Free cash flow to firm	(1,003)	(310)	(36)	298	950					
Core net profit YoY%	NM	NM	2,933.7	122.4	76.9	Free cash flow to equity	(627)	(322)	(136)	556	718					
Fully diluted EPS YoY%	NM	NM	NM	180.3	92.8	Source: Company data, BOCI	Research estima	ntes								

Source: Company data, BOCI Research estimates

						Key Ratios				
Balance Sheet (RMB m)						Year ended 31 Dec	2023	2024	2025E	2026E
As at 31 Dec	2023	2024	2025E	2026E	2027E	Profitability (%)				
Cash & cash equiv.	3,144	2,745	2,692	3,354	4,239	EBITDA margin	NM	NM	10.5	15.9
Receivables	530	519	764	1,176	1,767	EBIT margin	NM	NM	6.6	13.1
Inventories	496	477	677	1,064	1,266	Pre-tax margin	NM	NM	9.1	14.9
Other current assets	228	20	20	20	20	Net profit margin	NM	NM	7.7	12.6
Total current assets	4,398	3,761	4,153	5,614	7,292	Liquidity (x)				
Fixed assets	872	1,138	1,383	1,597	1,788	Current ratio	3.3	2.9	2.4	2.1
Intangible assets	362	422	482	542	602	Interest coverage	NM	NM	NM	NM
Other long term assets	32	32	32	32	32	Net debt to equity (%)	NM	NM	NM	NM
Total long-term assets	1,265	1,591	1,896	2,170	2,421	Quick ratio	2.9	2.5	2.0	1.7
Total assets	5,663	5,352	6,049	7,784	9,713	Valuation (x)				
Creditors	617	596	1,128	1,861	2,589	P/E	NM	NM	55.9	19.9
Short-term debt	112	100	0	258	26	Core P/E	NM	1,083.1	35.7	16.1
Other current liabs.	607	600	600	600	600	Core P/E @ target price	NM	1,691.3	55.8	25.1
Total current liabs.	1,335	1,296	1,728	2,719	3,214	P/B	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.1
Long-term borrowings	286	286	286	286	286	P/FCF	NM	NM	NM	49.8
Other long-term liabs.	179	10	10	10	10	EV/EBITDA	NM	NM	39.0	14.6
Share capital	7,424	7,424	7,424	7,424	7,424	Activity ratios				
Reserves/others	(3,562)	(3,664)	(3,399)	(2,655)	(1,221)	Inventory days	171.6	148.9	103.7	85.3
Shareholders' equity	3,862	3,760	4,025	4,769	6,203	Accounts	99.2	92.2	68.1	60.2
M.I./Pref. shr/Oth	0	0	0	0	0	receivables days	440.0	400.0	04.5	00.0
Total liabs. & equity	5,663	5,352	6,049	7,784	9,713	Accounts payables days	112.6	106.6	91.5	92.8
Per share (RMB)						Returns (%)	NIM	NINA	0	0
Book value	30.4	29.5	31.6	37.4	48.7	Dividend payout ratios	NM	NM 0.4	0	0
Tangible assets	27.6	26.2	27.8	33.2	43.9	Return on equity	NM	0.4	10.7	21.0
Net debt/(cash)	Net cash	Return on assets	NM NM	NM	3.4 7.4	11.1 18.2				
Cauras Campany data DOC	/ D					Return on capital	NM	NM	1.4	18.2

Source: Company data, BOCI Research estimates

Source: Company data, BOCI Research estimates

employed

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SELL: Stock with expected total absolute return (including dividends) < -10% over the next twelve months

OVERWEIGHT: Sector expected to outperform the market benchmark over the next twelve months NEUTRAL: Sector expected to perform in-line with market benchmark over the next twelve months UNDERWEIGHT: Sector expected to underperform the market benchmark over the next twelve months



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